



# The Songbird's Toolkit

A Comprehensive Guide to Unlocking  
Your Songwriting Potential

**BY: PROJECT SONGBIRD**

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## INTRODUCTION

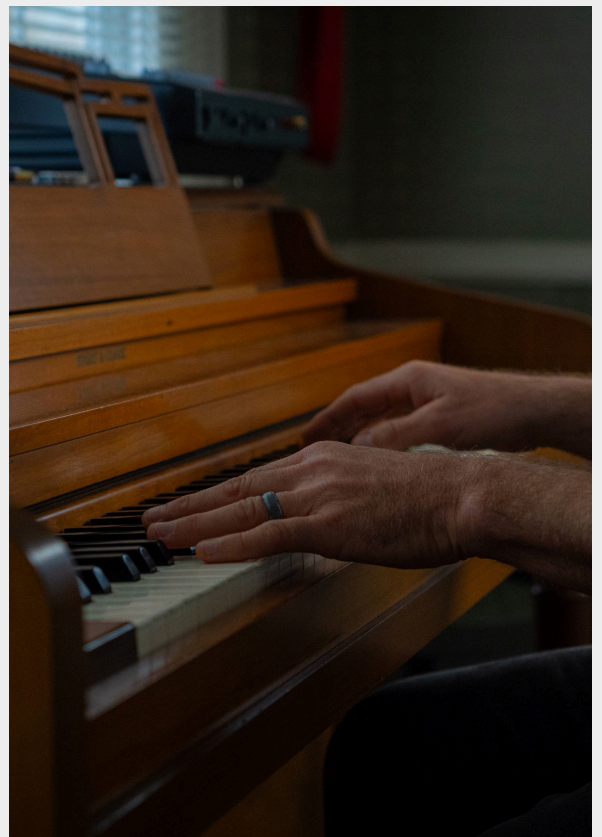
# Hey there!

*We're so glad you're here!*

By downloading this toolkit, you're showing real commitment to honing your craft and telling your story through song in a powerful way. Whether you're in a creative flow or stuck in writer's block, we're confident these prompts and templates are here to guide you forward.

Songwriting has **endless possibilities**—there's no single right way to start, develop, or finish a song. Some exercises may feel unfamiliar or even uncomfortable, and that's okay! They're designed to stretch you.

***Important Note:*** *The goal isn't to create a hit song on the spot, but to walk away with new tools and a stronger songwriting muscle. If a hit comes from it—AMAZING! But growth is the real win here.*



# The Songbird Community

**One more thing.** If you're anything like us, you might find yourself using this resource and thinking, "Is anyone else using this?" "I want to hear what other people get out of these prompts?" "Can I share my art with other creators like me?" Well fear not, **we have the perfect place for you!**

### Introducing the Project Songbird Private Forum — The Songbird Community!

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our private forum — a dedicated space for songwriters to connect, collaborate, and grow. Whether you're looking for feedback on your latest song, want to take on monthly songwriting challenges, or dive into tips and techniques, this forum is **built for you!**

Here's what you'll find inside:



**General Conversation** — A fun place to chat and connect.



**Project Songbird News** — Get exclusive updates and special promotions.



**Songwriting Hub** — Share songs for feedback, explore creative prompts, and get answers to your songwriting admin questions.



**Networking Opportunities** — Find co-writers, connect with industry peers, and share marketing ideas.

If this interests you at all, click on the link below to sign up! We'd love to have you join and share your art with us!!!

[Join The Songbird Community](#)

*Now, let's dive in and create something great!*

# QUICK-START PROMPTS: INSTANT INSPIRATION

## Emotion-Based Prompts

*We're blessed to experience a wide range of emotions, each with its own depth and intensity.*

You can write about moments that are mildly sad or overwhelmingly joyful. You can draw from past experiences, what you're feeling right now, or even step into someone else's emotions. And why stop at just one? A song can be an emotional rollercoaster, taking listeners on a journey in just three minutes.

Do you get it yet? **ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.**

With that in mind, here are some ***emotion-based*** prompts to spark your creativity. This list is just the beginning—use it as inspiration to explore even more ways to write from the heart!

### ♥ *Love & Heartbreak*

- Write a love song where you **never use** the words "love" "heart" or "pain".
- Write a song where the lyrics mirror **the nervous excitement of a first date.**
- Tell a love story where both people are in **different places** but still feel connected.
- Write about the **little, everyday moments** that make you love someone more.
- Write a breakup song, but make it sound **celebratory** instead of sad.
- Describe a person who **healed wounds you didn't even know you had.**
- Describe the feeling of **being with someone but still feeling lonely.**
- Describe a moment when you **realized you didn't have to be perfect to be loved.**
- Create a song where the chorus stays the same, but the **verses show a relationship slowly fading.**
- Imagine two people who speak **different languages** but still understand each other perfectly.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)

### *Regret & Reflection*

- Imagine a letter to someone you **never told how much they meant to you**—what would it say?
- Write about **watching someone move on** when you still haven't.
- Create a song with **only questions**—leave it open-ended for the listener.
- Write about **regretting something that seemed small at the time**, but now feels huge.
- Describe a time when you blamed yourself for something that wasn't entirely your fault.
- Imagine writing a song as **your older self**, reflecting on the lessons they've learned.
- Reflect on a time when **you thought you knew everything**, but looking back, you realize how much you didn't understand.
- Write about a regret that turned into a **blessing in disguise** over time.
- Describe the feeling of **rebuilding after a big loss or failure**—how do you start again?

### *Joy & Nostalgia*

- Describe the **best day of your life** in vivid detail, making the listener feel like they were there.
- Write about a **childhood memory** that still makes you smile.
- Capture the feeling of **dancing alone in your room** with no worries.
- Imagine a song playing during the best road trip of your life—**what does it sound like?**
- Write about a place from your past that no longer exists—a **house, a park, a hangout spot**.
- Write a song as if you're flipping through **an old photo album**.
- Write about a time when you **wished you could stay in a moment forever**.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)

### *Anger & Frustration*

- Write about a situation where **someone crossed a line**, and you couldn't stay silent anymore.
- Describe **anger without saying the word "angry"**.
- Write about the **moment right before you explode** but never let the song fully "erupt."
- Create a song where the verses are calm, but the chorus is full of rage.
- Write a song about **feeling like no one is listening to you**, but you're still shouting out for change.
- Describe a time when you put your heart into something, but **it still fell apart**—how did it make you feel?
- Create a song where every verse shows **another door closing**, and the chorus is pure frustration.
- Imagine the internal conflict of someone who is **angry but can't express it**—what happens inside their mind?

### *Longing & Missing Someone*

- Write about missing someone but **pretend they're still there** in your lyrics.
- Describe the exact **scent, sound, or place** that reminds you of them.
- Write a song from the perspective of someone waiting at a train station for someone who never arrives.
- Write about how the world **feels quieter** without that person around, as if something vital is missing.
- Write about **moving on but still feeling their presence everywhere**.
- Imagine being in a room full of people, but still **feeling the absence of that one person** you long for.
- Capture the frustration of **not being able to tell someone you miss them** because they're too far to reach.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)

### *Longing & Missing Someone (cont.)*

- Capture the feeling of **watching the world move on**, but feeling stuck in time with your memories of them.
- Imagine writing a song about **waiting at a place you used to go together**, knowing it's where you'll meet again.
- Write about feeling like there's an **invisible thread that connects you to them**, but the distance makes it feel so fragile.

## Scenario-Based Prompts

These prompts are incredibly helpful because this style of writing engages the senses and puts both you and your listeners into a vivid scenario, creating a story. The variables are people, time, location & things and you can use any combination of these—such good news! There's no shortage of scenarios you can either recall or construct for your song. But here are few to get you started!

### *Movie Scene Scenario*

- Write about a **dramatic love confession** in a movie-like moment, where everything seems to freeze as you tell them how much they mean to you.
- A long-lost love showing up on a **doorstep after years apart**, holding an old letter that was never sent.
- A fight breaks out in a neon-lit alley, the world a **blur of fists, flashing lights, and adrenaline**.
- A character burns a **pile of old photographs**, watching their past turn to ashes in the night.
- A person finally opening a **letter that was never meant to be read**, uncovering a truth too late.
- A character staring at their phone, **watching the three dots appear and disappear**, waiting for a reply that never comes.



## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *Movie Scene Scenario (cont.)*

- A person moving into their first apartment alone, **spinning in an empty room, feeling both terrified and free.**
- Two people arguing in the middle of a street, **screaming through tears, knowing this is the last fight they'll ever have.**
- A car crash in slow motion, **glass shattering, memories flashing before someone's eyes.**
- A person standing outside a house at night, debating **whether to knock or walk away forever.**
- A secret meeting on a rooftop, where two people share a truth **no one else can ever know.**
- A character dancing alone in their bedroom, **completely lost in the music**, as if no one else in the world exists.
- A character walking through a city where **time moves in reverse**, memories playing out like a film reel.
- A person following a trail of **glowing lanterns** leading them to something—or someone—they never expected.
- A girl twirling in the middle of a library, where the **books are whispering stories only she can hear.**



### *Last Words Scenario*

- Imagine you had one last chance to **say something to someone** before they leave—what would you say? Write that conversation into a song.
- Write a song about **saying goodbye** to someone you've known for years—whether it's a Write about a **final phone call** where neither person wants to hang up, knowing it's the last time they'll hear each other's voice.
- Imagine a breakup where one person **walks away mid-conversation**, leaving the other with words still unsaid.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *Last Words Scenario (cont.)*

- Write about a moment where someone says, **“See you later,” but later never comes.**
- Tell the story of someone who wrote a letter they **never got to send**, and now it sits unopened, filled with everything they never said.
- Write about a dream where someone **gets one last chance** to speak to someone they lost.
- Imagine a scenario where someone’s last words appear **as a message in unexpected places**—like a billboard, a fortune cookie, or a whispered breeze.
- Write about someone standing at a **train station or airport**, watching their loved one disappear into the crowd, with only their final words echoing in their mind.
- Tell the story of two people who parted on **bad terms**, but one of them later finds out something tragic happened to the other.



### *A Crossroads Scenario*

- Imagine two people at a **train station, airport, or bus stop**, one about to leave and the other unsure whether to ask them to stay.
- Imagine someone on the verge of **leaving their hometown**, torn between the comfort of the familiar and the thrill of the unknown.
- Write from the perspective of someone who just received **an offer that could change everything**, but it means sacrificing something else important.
- Imagine standing on a bridge, looking at two paths—**one safe, one risky**—and knowing you can’t go back once you choose.
- Imagine a chance encounter with **someone who hurt you**, and now they’re asking for another chance—do you forgive them or walk away?
- Tell the story of someone realizing they’re still in love with a person from their past, but they’re too late—**the other person has moved on.**
- Imagine running into an ex at a wedding, reunion, or milestone event, and both of you know this could be your last chance to say what was left unsaid.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *A Crossroads Scenario (cont.)*

- Tell the story of someone who **delayed making a choice for too long**, and now the decision has been made for them.
- Write about an artist who's been chasing their dream for years, and they have to decide: **keep going or finally quit**.
- Write about two people who love each other but have **different dreams**—one craves stability, the other adventure.
- Tell the story of two people who agreed to meet at a certain place and time—**but one of them never shows**.
- Imagine being able to see a glimpse of the **two different futures** based on which path you choose.



### *Homecoming Scenario*

- Write about someone returning to their **childhood home** after years away, only to find everything has changed—or stayed eerily the same.
- Write a song where you're **reunited with a family member or friend** after years apart, but the emotional distance still lingers.
- Tell the story of someone revisiting their **favorite childhood hangout**, only to realize it's been torn down, abandoned, or completely different.
- Imagine someone driving down the **same old roads** but feeling like a stranger in the place they once knew so well.
- Tell the story of an unexpected homecoming—**someone who was thought to be gone forever suddenly returns**.
- Explore a scenario where someone comes home to **reconcile a broken relationship**—whether it's with family, a friend, or an old love.
- Write about a **military service member returning home**, seeing their loved ones at the airport or train station.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *Homecoming Scenario (cont.)*

- Imagine coming home after **achieving a big dream**, but realizing that success feels empty without the people you left behind.
- Tell the story of someone **restoring an old home**, rebuilding not just the house, but themselves.
- Imagine a person standing at their **front door after years away**, hesitating before stepping inside, knowing everything is about to change.



### *Road Trip Scenario*

- Write about a **long drive** with someone you love, talking about everything and nothing while the world passes by outside.
- Imagine being on a road trip by yourself, **driving through new places**, and reflecting on the people you've left behind or the ones you miss.
- Write a song about being in the **passenger seat**, lost in thought, watching the landscape change as you drive towards an uncertain future.
- Write about two friends who suddenly decide to **drop everything and hit the road**, with no destination in mind.
- Tell the story of someone who gets in the car with a **one-way ticket mindset**, unsure if they'll ever come back.
- Write about a group of strangers who **meet by chance and end up on the same road trip**, changing each other's lives along the way.
- Imagine someone leaving a **bad breakup behind** and driving west, watching their past fade away in the rearview mirror.
- Write about two lovers making a pact: **"Let's just keep driving until we figure life out."**
- Write about someone who **doesn't know where they're going, only that they can't stay where they were**.
- Imagine someone who **never takes risks** suddenly deciding to take a cross-country road trip—learning more about themselves with every mile.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *Road Trip Scenario (cont.)*

- Explore the emotions of someone stopping at a roadside diner, realizing it's the same place they once made a **life-changing decision**.
- Write about a drive back to a hometown, where **every exit sign brings back a different memory**.
- Write about a road trip that starts out as **fun and carefree** but takes an unexpected emotional turn.
- Tell the story of a traveler who keeps seeing the **same stranger at every stop**, making them wonder if it's fate.
- Imagine getting lost on a road trip and stumbling upon a **mysterious town that isn't on any map**.
- Write about a road trip where the **playlist tells the story**—each song triggering a new memory or emotion.
- Write about an epic road trip to see an artist live, where the **journey to the concert is just as memorable as the show itself**.



### *Concert Scenario*

- Tell the story of someone seeing their **favorite artist live for the first time**, finally hearing the songs that shaped their life in person.
- Imagine being at a concert and feeling like you **lost the connection with the crowd**, but the only person who truly gets you is the one who's not there.
- Write about the bittersweet feeling of the **last song of the night**, knowing the magic is about to end.
- Capture the **post-concert high**, driving home in the middle of the night with ears ringing and a heart full of memories.
- Explore the feeling of a person who bought **two tickets for a concert months ago**, but now they're going alone.
- Tell the story of a person at a concert, realizing that they've been living life **on autopilot and need to make a big change**.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *Concert Scenario (cont.)*

- Tell the story of an artist playing their final show before **retiring or disappearing from the spotlight**.
- Explore the feelings of a local artist **playing to a nearly empty room**, wondering if their big break will ever come.
- Write about someone getting **engaged in the middle of a concert**, surrounded by thousands of people singing along.
- Tell the story of a surprise **special guest appearance**, sending the crowd into an unforgettable frenzy.



### *Fall Leaves Scenario*

- Write about a breakup that happened **on a crisp autumn day**, where every falling leaf feels like a reminder of what was lost.
- Imagine a person standing under a tree, reading an old love letter as **leaves swirl around them like ghosts of the past**.
- Write about a character watching the leaves fall and realizing **some things (or people) are only meant to stay for a season**.
- Write about two people **bundled up in scarves**, sharing a coffee on a park bench as leaves crunch under their boots.
- Tell the story of a slow dance in the middle of a **deserted street covered in red and gold leaves**.
- Write about someone writing their **lover's name in the foggy window of a coffee shop**, watching them approach through the falling leaves.
- Explore the warmth of a **first kiss under a tree bursting with orange and gold**.
- Tell the story of someone escaping to a small cabin in the woods for autumn, seeking **peace, healing, or inspiration**.
- Explore the feeling of standing in the middle of a forest, **watching the leaves fall like a quiet, golden snowfall**—a moment of absolute clarity.

## QUICK-START PROMPTS (CONT.)



### *Fall Leaves Scenario (cont.)*

- Write about an old town where **every fall, the wind carries whispers through the trees**—and someone finally listens.
- Tell the story of a mysterious figure who always appears **when the autumn leaves begin to fall**, vanishing with the first snowfall.
- Explore the eerie beauty of a **forgotten pumpkin patch**, where every year, something—or someone—returns.



### *Beach Scenario*

- Two people walking along the shoreline at sunset, **bare feet in the sand, hands barely touching**, unsure if this is the start of something new or the end of something beautiful.
- A message in a bottle washes up on shore—**who sent it, and what does it say?**
- A couple dancing under the moonlight on the beach, **slow and sweet, with the waves as their only music.**
- One lover leaving footprints in the sand, the other chasing after them—**but will they ever catch up?**
- A spontaneous midnight swim under the stars—**hearts racing, saltwater in their hair, feeling infinite.**
- Falling asleep on the beach, only to wake up to **the tide creeping closer and the sun rising.**
- A wedding ring lost in the sand—**was it an accident, or was it meant to be left behind?**
- A mysterious figure always appears at the same spot on the beach **every full moon— who are they waiting for?**
- A song carried by the wind, **whispering secrets from the sea**—who is calling, and why?
- The ocean washes up an **object that shouldn't exist**, changing everything for the person who finds it.
- A lighthouse that only appears **when the fog rolls in**, calling lost souls home.
- A traveler stumbling upon a **hidden beach that isn't on any map**, feeling like they've discovered paradise.

# PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS

*While writing from a first person perspective at a current moment in time about something that happened to you is a **great** perspective to write from, it is also one of **many** perspectives.*

If this is exclusively how you write, you **WILL** have writer's block. One person can only have so many experiences of their own to write about. You also might not be able to fully internalize what your current experience is in such a way that you can express it in song. But fear not, this next list will give you inspiration on different perspectives to write from that you might not have considered before! Once again, not an exhaustive list. If these get you thinking beyond what's in this guide, that's a win in our book. 😊

## 1. *Then vs. Now*

*(Contrast how things felt in the past vs. how they feel now.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1:** "I used to think love was forever, your hand always in mine..."
- **Chorus:** "But now I stand in the same place, and you're nowhere to be found."
- **Verse 2:** "I laughed at the thought of goodbye, never thought we'd fade..."
- **Bridge:** "Looking back, I can see the signs—I just refused to believe."

## 2. *Two Sides of a Breakup*

*(One person's view vs. the other person's view of a breakup.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Person A):** "I fought for us, but you were already gone."
- **Verse 2 (Person B):** "I tried to stay, but I was breaking inside."
- **Bridge:** "Maybe we were both right, maybe we were both wrong."



**Variation:** Make the chorus the same lyrics, but the meaning changes depending on who sings it!



# PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS (CONT.)

## 3. *Younger vs. Older Self*

*(Advice from your older self to your younger self—or vice versa!)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Young self):** "I can't wait to leave this town, chase my dreams, never slow down."
- **Chorus (Older self):** "You'll miss the way the sunset kissed your street, the voices that felt like home."
- **Verse 2 (Older self):** "I've learned that fast isn't always free, and chasing more left less of me."
- **Bridge:** "If I could go back, I'd tell you to stay a little longer."

## 4. *Outsider vs. Insider*

*(One verse from an observer's POV, another from someone living it.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Observer):** "She walks through the crowd, smiling like she's got it all."
- **Chorus:** "But I wonder if she's hiding a storm behind those eyes."
- **Verse 2 (Her perspective):** "I wear the smile they expect, but inside, I'm barely holding on."
- **Bridge:** "They see the light, but not the fire burning me down."

# PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS (CONT.)

## 5. *First Person vs. Third Person*

*(The song starts in third person, then shifts into first person for an emotional twist.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Third Person):** "She waited by the door, letter clutched tight, hoping he'd walk in."
- **Chorus:** "But the house stayed silent, and the world kept turning."
- **Verse 2 (First Person):** "I waited by the door, letter clutched tight, hoping you'd walk in."
- **Bridge:** "I still hear your footsteps, even though they never came."

## 6. *Present vs. Future*

*(A shift in perspective where the character imagines how things will feel in the future.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Present):** "Right now, it hurts like hell, can't see past the tears."
- **Chorus:** "But one day, I'll look back and smile, knowing I survived it all."
- **Verse 2 (Future Self):** "I see you now, younger and lost, wishing you knew you'd be okay."
- **Bridge:** "If I could reach through time, I'd tell you to hold on."

# PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS (CONT.)

## 7. *Stranger vs. Someone You Know*

*(A character sees someone from afar, then realizes they have a deep connection.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1:** "I see her laughing across the room, wild and free like a dream."
- **Chorus:** "She feels familiar, like a song I used to sing."
- **Verse 2:** "Then she turns, and I see her face—it's been years, but she still looks the same."
- **Bridge:** "Funny how time makes strangers out of the ones we used to love."

## 8. *Past Love vs. Current Love*

*(Comparing a love from the past to the love they have now—or thought they had.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Past Love):** "We ran through the streets, hands entwined, thought forever meant forever."
- **Chorus:** "But I learned that love can change, and hearts can slip away."
- **Verse 2 (Current Love):** "Now I wake up beside you, and love is steady, warm, and true."
- **Bridge:** "Some love burns fast, some love burns long—but both leave their mark."

# PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS (CONT.)

## 9. *Life Before vs. After Someone*

*(How life felt before someone entered it vs. how it feels now—or how it feels after they're gone.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Before):** "I was just a drifting wave, no anchor, no direction."
- **Chorus:** "Then you walked in and wrote color into my grayscale world."
- **Verse 2 (After):** "Now I'm back to floating aimlessly, looking for a sign of you."
- **Bridge:** "You taught me love, then taught me how to live without it."

## 10. *The "Parallel Universe" Perspective Shift*

*(One verse tells a story in one reality, the second verse imagines how things could have gone differently.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Reality):** "You packed your bags, left at dawn, didn't even say goodbye."
- **Chorus:** "But in another life, we stayed up talking until the sunrise."
- **Verse 2 (What Could've Been):** "You smiled and took my hand, and we never walked away."
- **Bridge:** "I'll never know which story was meant to be ours."

# PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS (CONT.)

## 11. *The "Letter" Perspective Shift*

*(A character writes a letter but never sends it—until, in the bridge, the recipient finds it.)*



Example:

- **Verse 1 (Writing the letter):** "I scribble down the words I wish I'd said."
- **Chorus:** "But this letter will never leave my hands."
- **Verse 2 (Time passes):** "Years go by, and I wonder if you ever knew."
- **Bridge (They find the letter):** "You trace the words, whisper my name, but it's too late now."



# LYRIC STRUCTURE TEMPLATES: PLUG AND PLAY IDEAS

*Sometimes it's really helpful to zoom out on the song and think of it in sections.*

It can be effective to decide what you want the arch of the storytelling to be throughout the song. This can provide you with a basic framework or outline for lyrical themes and content. This is a song structure you've seen plenty of times before:



## Classic Song Structure (Verse - Chorus - Verse - Chorus - Bridge - Chorus)

Now, we'd never recommend that you ONLY write using a Classic Song Structure because there are a variety of ways that you can structure the sections of a song. However, for all intents and purposes, we'll be using the Classic Song Structure for our storytelling examples below. Just think, if ALL of these examples can be thought of in just one kind of Structure, how many more could you create with the others available to you. **ENDLESS. POSSIBILITIES.**

## 1. Classic Storytelling Structure

(Great for songs that tell a clear narrative from start to finish.)



**Example Songs:** "Fast Car" (Tracy Chapman), "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia" (Vicki Lawrence).

**Verse 1** – Set the scene, introduce the main character or situation.

**Chorus** – Big emotional takeaway—what's the heart of the story?

**Verse 2** – Continue the story, adding depth or conflict.

**Chorus** – Reinforce the main message.

**Bridge** – The turning point—does something change?

**Chorus** – Final realization or resolution.

# LYRIC STRUCTURE TEMPLATES (CONT.)

## 2. *The "One Moment in Time" Structure*

(Captures an intense feeling or experience in one frozen moment.)



**Example Songs:** "Someone Like You" (Adele), "Iris" (Goo Goo Dolls).

**Verse 1** – Describe the scene/situation.

**Pre-Chorus** – Build-up of tension or anticipation.

**Chorus** – Hit the emotional high—what's the feeling in this moment?

**Verse 2** – Deepen the emotion, add more detail.

**Pre-Chorus** – Increase intensity.

**Chorus** – Bigger and more emotional than before.

**Bridge** – A shift in perspective or final realization.

**Final Chorus** – Big, climactic, emotional release.

## 3. *The Question & Answer Structure*

(Great for songs that feel conversational, reflective, or explore emotions deeply.)



**Example Songs:** "Hello" (Adele), "Say Something" (A Great Big World).

**Verse 1** – Ask a question, express uncertainty.

**Chorus** – Give a partial answer, but leave some mystery.

**Verse 2** – Ask another question, deepen the emotional weight.

**Chorus** – Reinforce the main emotional theme.

**Bridge** – A turning point, realization, or dramatic moment.

**Final Chorus** – A final response—either closure or more uncertainty.

# LYRIC STRUCTURE TEMPLATES (CONT.)

## 4. *The Repetitive Hook Structure*

(Designed for super-catchy, earworm songs with strong repetition.)



**Example Songs:** "Shape of You" (Ed Sheeran), "Uptown Funk" (Mark Ronson ft. Bruno Mars).

**Intro** – A catchy instrumental hook or vocal melody.

**Verse 1** – Set the scene with a groove.

**Pre-Chorus** – Build anticipation.

**Chorus** – Repetitive, memorable hook (short & impactful).

**Verse 2** – Slight variation, but keeps the energy.

**Pre-Chorus** – Build again.

**Chorus** – Even bigger, repeat the hook.

**Bridge or Drop** – Instrumental break, unexpected twist.

**Final Chorus** – Strongest repetition, slightly varied for impact.

## 5. *The Time-Lapse Story Structure*

(Follows a character's journey through different life stages.)



**Example Songs:** "7 Years" (Lukas Graham), "The House That Built Me" (Miranda Lambert).

**Verse 1** – Childhood (or a past moment).

**Chorus** – The main message—something that remains true through time.

**Verse 2** – Teenage or young adult years—what's changed?

**Chorus** – Same message, but now it hits differently.

**Verse 3** – Adulthood or later years—how has time shaped this perspective?

**Final Chorus** – The message now has full meaning and weight.



# LYRIC STRUCTURE TEMPLATES (CONT.)

## 6. *The List Song Structure*

(Uses a repeating pattern to list different experiences, places, or emotions.)



**Example Songs:** "I've Been Everywhere" (Johnny Cash), "Things That Make You Go Hmmm" (C+C Music Factory).

**Verse 1** – Introduce a repeating idea ("All the places I've been...")

**Chorus** – Catchy summary of the main theme.

**Verse 2** – More variations of the list.

**Chorus** – Repeat the hook.

**Bridge** – Unexpected twist (a new perspective).

**Final Chorus** – Bring it all together.

## 7. *The "Two Perspectives" Structure*

(Uses contrasting perspectives to tell a full story—great for duets or layered meanings.)



**Example Songs:** "Somewhere Out There" (Linda Ronstadt & James Ingram), "Exile" (Taylor Swift & Bon Iver).

**Verse 1 – Perspective A** – One character's emotions/thoughts.

**Verse 2 – Perspective B** – The other character's viewpoint.

**Chorus** – A shared feeling or conflicting emotions.

**Bridge** – A realization, moment of understanding, or intensifying conflict.

**Final Chorus** – Either resolution or deeper division.

# LYRIC STRUCTURE TEMPLATES (CONT.)

## 8. *The "Reverse Story" Structure*

(Starts at the end of the story and works backward.)



**Example Songs:** "The Night We Met" (Lord Huron), "Happier Than Ever" (Billie Eilish).

**Chorus** – The ending moment, the emotional peak.

**Verse 1** – The moment before the ending—how did we get here?

**Verse 2** – A memory or past event that led to this.

**Bridge** – A realization of what was lost or changed.

**Final Chorus** – The full weight of the ending now hits even harder.

## *BONUS Alternative Structures for Creativity*

In case you were wondering what some of those other structures were that we mentioned. 😊

### **"Start with the Hook" Template:**

- Hook/Chorus first → Verse 1 → Pre-Chorus → Chorus → Verse 2 → Bridge → Outro
- Great for catchy pop & R&B songs.

### **"Storytelling Ballad" Template:**

- Verse 1 (Past) → Verse 2 (Present) → Chorus (Reflection) → Verse 3 (Future) → Final Chorus

# MELODY AND RHYTHM JUMPSTARTERS

## *Do you like a challenge?*

Does something light up within you when there's a seemingly impossible task put in front of you? This next section is for you! Below will be a series of random challenges and jumpstarters that will spark a different side of your creativity. If you read any one of these and say, "**Surely no one would write that way, right?**", that's probably the exact challenge you need to try! Give it a go!

## *Melody Jump-Starters*

### 1. The "Question & Answer" Trick

- Sing a melodic phrase that **feels like a question** (rises at the end).
- Follow it with a phrase that **resolves like an answer** (falls at the end).



Example:

"Where did you go last night?" (rising)

"I was waiting by the door..." (falling)

### 2. Lyric-Driven Melody

- Speak a phrase naturally, then **match the melody to its natural rhythm**.



Example:

Try saying, "I can't believe you're standing here" and exaggerate the melody in your speech.

# MELODY AND RHYTHM JUMPSTARTERS (CONT.)

## 3. One-Note Challenge

- Sing a melody using only **one note** for the verse.
- Break out into a **wide melodic jump** for the chorus.



Example:

Verse stays on a steady note → Chorus leaps higher

## 4. The “Morse Code” Approach

- Tap out a **random** rhythm (like Morse code or a drum groove).
- Fit a melody into the rhythm.



Example:

Short-short-long | short-short-long

## 5. Reverse It!

- Take a melody you’ve written and **sing it backward** or change the order of the notes.

## 6. Borrow from Speech Patterns

- Record yourself telling a story or venting about something.
- Listen to how your voice **naturally rises and falls**—turn that into a melody!

## 7. The “High-Low” Game

- Start your verse on a **low note range**, then make your chorus **explode into a higher range** for contrast.



Example:

Think of how “Someone Like You” (Adele) builds up in the chorus!

# MELODY AND RHYTHM JUMPSTARTERS (CONT.)

## *Rhythm Jump-Starters*

### 1. The Clap & Sing Trick

- Clap out a random rhythm and **fit a melody into the gaps**.



Example:

Clap-clap | pause | clap-clap-clap → Sing a melody that fits that space.

### 2. Borrow a Beat

- Pick a **drum pattern** from a song in a totally different genre.
- Hum a melody over it!

### 3. Chop Up a Line

- Take a line and rearrange where the emphasis falls.



Example:

Instead of: "I never wanted to leave you behind."

Try: "I NEVER | wanted TO | leave YOU | beHIND."

### 4. Syncopation Shift

- Write a **straight rhythm** first, then shift some syllables **offbeat** for a groovier feel.



Example:

Instead of singing every word **on the beat**, shift accents to the **offbeat**.

# MELODY AND RHYTHM JUMPSTARTERS (CONT.)

## 5. Long vs. Short Notes

- Sing the same melody twice, but the first time **hold out long notes**, and the second time **make it all short and punchy**.

## 6. The “Drunk & Sober” Trick

- Sing a phrase **super slowly**, stretching every note out.
- Then **tighten it up** and sing it faster with groove.

## 7. Call & Response Groove

- Create a **“call”** melody with longer notes.
- Follow with a **“response”** melody with short, rhythmic notes.



Example:

“I was waiting by the door” (long notes) → “Did you even care at all?” (short, punchy notes)



# CONCLUSION

We hope you found these tools, prompts and jumpstarters helpful in sparking creativity and inspiration in your songwriting journey! We fundamentally believe that every person has a story to tell. You have chosen to tell it through song and that's an **AMAZING** thing.

It is our desire to enrich the songwriters experience by providing them with all of the resources and services they need to create with complete freedom! If you found this resource to be useful, we encourage you to explore all of the other resources we have to offer including our Project Songbird Podcast, Blogs, Social Media, & our stellar Music Production and Mixing & Mastering services.

Blessings,  
Project Songbird



# CONCLUSION

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